

Application No.: 10/606025

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for control of an operator-controlled system by a user, comprising the steps of:

providing a graphical user interface in a first mode of operation, wherein a first control element is shown;

receiving an invocation by the user representative of a request for the functionality of the first control element;

determining the current status condition of the first control element among a predetermined plurality of status conditions which includes an inactive control element condition and an active control element condition;

in response to an invocation of the functionality of ~~a~~-the first control element when the current status of the control element is a respective first status condition among ~~a~~-the predetermined plurality of status conditions, changing the graphical user interface to a second mode of operation, wherein context-sensitive help information is provided in the graphical user interface;

providing ~~a prompt to a~~ second control element, the second control element being operable to enable the user to select an automated procedure so as to change the current status of the first control element to a second status condition in the predetermined ~~set~~-plurality of status conditions;

in response to receiving invocation of the automated procedure, performing the automated procedure so as to cause the status of the first control element to be changed to ~~a~~-the second status condition; and

in response to completion of the automated procedure and in the event that the first status condition is an inactive control element condition, changing the graphical user interface to a third mode of operation, wherein the requested functionality of the first control element is made available to the user.

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2. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the first status condition is an ~~inactive~~-active control element condition and the second status is an active-~~inactive~~ control element condition, whereupon in response to completion of the automated procedure and in the event that the first status condition is an active control element condition, the graphical user interface is changed to a fourth mode of operation, wherein the requested functionality of the first control element is made unavailable to the user.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 2**, further comprising the steps of graphically representing the current status condition of the first control element in the graphical user interface.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 3**, further comprising the step of providing a change in the appearance of the first control element corresponding to the change from the first status condition to the second status condition.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, further comprising the step of altering the appearance of at least a portion of the first control element to reflect the status currently set for the first control element relative to the available functionality of the first control element.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 5**, wherein the appearance of at least a portion of the first control element is grayed-out during a status condition for the first control element of inactive functionality.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the context-sensitive help indicates a basis for the first status condition of the first control element.

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8. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, further comprising the step of providing a third control element operable by the user ~~for rejecting the prompt and for~~ causing the graphical user interface to return to the first mode of operation.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the invocation of the functionality of the first control element is performed by operation of a cursor-based input system.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the invocation of the functionality of the first control element is performed by operation of a touchscreen input system.